

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Examiner: I. N. Borissov

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A concise explanation of relevance of the item listed on form PTO/SB/08 is in the form of a copy of an Office Action from a foreign patent office, issued in a counterpart application, which refers to the relevant portions of the reference.

In accordance with 37 CFR §1.97(g), the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement shall not be construed to mean that a search has been made or that no other material information as defined in 37 CFR §1.56(a) exists. In accordance with 37 CFR §1.97(h), the filing of this Information Disclosure statement shall not be construed to be an admission that any patent, publication or other information referred to therein is “prior art” for this invention unless specifically designated as such.

It is submitted that the Information Disclosure Statement is in compliance with 37 CFR §1.98 and the Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the listed reference.

This Information Disclosure Statement should be considered, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.97, because it is being submitted before a first action on the merits has been mailed after the filing of a Request for Continued Examination and, thus, no fee is due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees deemed required in connection with this Petition or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 04-0100.

Dated: August 2, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By

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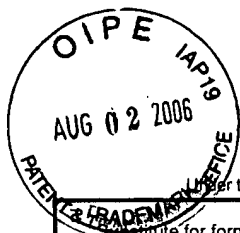
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| INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Use as many sheets as necessary) | | | | Complete if Known | |
| | | | | Application Number | 09/976,259-Conf. #9702 |
| | | | | Filing Date | October 12, 2001 |
| | | | | First Named Inventor | Tsutomu Kurokawa |
| | | | | Art Unit | 2834 |
| | | | | Examiner Name | I. N. Borissov |
| Sheet | 1 | of | 1 | Attorney Docket Number | 09614/000L098-USO |

| U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Examiner Initials* | Cite No. ¹ | Document Number | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear |
| | | Number-Kind Code ² (if known) | | | |
| | AA* | US-5,852,658 | 12-22-1998 | Knight et al. | |

| FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| Examiner Initials* | Cite No. ¹ | Foreign Patent Document | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear | T ⁶ |
| | | Country Code ³ -Number ⁴ -Kind Code ⁵ (if known) | | | | |
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant. * CITE NO.: Those application(s) which are marked with an single asterisk (*) next to the Cite No. are not supplied (under 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2)(iii)) because that application was filed after June 30, 2003 or is available in the IFW. ¹ Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). ² See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.uspto.gov or MPEP 901.04. ³ Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁶ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

| NON PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------|
| Examiner Initials | Cite No. ¹ | Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published. | T ² |
| | CA | Canadian Office Action dated April 19, 2006 for CA2,358,745 . | |
| | CB | Communication pursuant to Article 96(2) EPC dated July 5, 2006 for European Patent Application No. 01 308 683.0. | |

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¹ Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). ² Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

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| Examiner Signature | | Date Considered | |
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